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15 July 1970

MEMORANDUM FOR THE RECORD

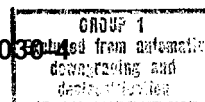
SUBJECT: Meeting with Executive Director-Comptroller
regarding Alcohol Program and Problems of
Drug Abuse

1. Mr. Bannerman and I met with Col. White in response to his recent query as to what is being done regarding an alcohol program and whether or not we have a problem with drugs. Mr. Bannerman and I had met on this subject previously and together we outlined our attitudes and procedures. In general what we had to say amounted to a statement that cases of problem drinking do exist, but that the incidence does not warrant a separate campaign in order to deal with a major problem. In regard drug abuse, it was stated that the Agency does not have a problem as far as we know among Agency staff personnel; but that problem cases do exist among dependents -- both here and overseas. A related area of interest involves the qualifications of applicants who for one reason or another may have had drug experiences.

2. Elaborating on the foregoing, it was pointed out that the subject of problem drinking was included as a topic in a variety of OTR courses including: Trends and Highlights, Mid-Career, Station Chief Seminar, and various panels. It was mentioned that discussions are now on-going to participate in the Supervisors' Course in terms of advising as to how to relate to the Office of Medical Services in the handling of problem cases. In terms of diagnosis, it was mentioned that diagnosis was accomplished through a variety of ways; among them: consultative services, advisory services to the supervisor, re-examination programs, and fitness-for-duty examinations. In terms of disposition, the procedures of referral were mentioned along with follow-up activities, as well as the use of administrative dispositions such as conditional service and disability retirement.

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3. In outlining the foregoing, it was emphasized that OMS does not have a separate program exclusively designed for problems with alcohol; but rather that we regard problems with alcohol as only one aspect of a variety of medical problems with which we must deal. It was emphasized the procedures that had been outlined also applied to other types of medical problems, and that we were dealing with the larger question of medical problems as they effect employment. To these procedures I added the comment that early referral of all problems was desirable and that this might be particularly true in problems with use of alcohol where the tendency is to avoid recognition until the problem becomes intolerable. I suggested that a comment by management to that effect, for example to the Deputy Directors, might facilitate early attempts at recognition and referral.

4. In regard drug abuse, it was emphasized that any problems that exist and come to our medical attention are those of dependents and not of staff employees. I cited briefly some of our experiences with dependents and cases of drug abuse occurring overseas and at home. I also outlined our criteria for evaluation of young applicants with a given history of drug usage.


5. Col. White was generally satisfied with this verbal report; he wondered about the incidence of cases of problem drinking occurring in the Agency and I advised that we had no good figures on the subject. I stated that we have not attempted to keep score on the incidents that come to our attention. I indicated that this was a reflection of the difficulties involved in keeping any accurate tally, but it also served to indicate that we did not feel that keeping such a tally was necessarily productive. Col. White expressed more interest in terms of drug abuse and wondered whether there should be some broader efforts in getting the message across

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to the Agency. Both Mr. Bannerman and I mentioned some of our efforts in that direction, including some of the future plans such as movies and seminars. We came to a conclusion that perhaps more needed to be done in this area, but that it would require some rather deliberate consideration as to what might be involved. Certainly no drastic change in current efforts or direction have evolved from this meeting.

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OMS/JRT:jvk

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